

School of Mechanical Engineering

Policy on Research Lab Safety in ME Building and Gatewood Wing

02/14/2021

General Information:

Safety violations, especially in the research labs, are serious since they can endanger the people working in the lab or potentially everyone in the building. This policy is designed to ensure that any issues that have been identified in any research labs in the ME building or Gatewood are rectified in a timely manner. If not, then serious consequences can result.

Although the faculty member in charge of each lab space (or portion of each lab area) is ultimately responsible for safety in the lab, it is highly recommended that each lab space have an individual designated as safety coordinator to oversee all safety-related procedures in that lab. The Assistant Head will keep a list of these designated safety coordinators for each lab area, and this list will be updated annually.

Periodic Safety Checks:

A small inspection committee consisting of 3 people, including the Building Deputy, will make periodic inspections of all research labs in the ME building and Gatewood each quarter.

Keeping Records of Violations:

Documentation of all safety violations found at these safety inspections will be kept on file for each lab, along with photos, classification of the severity of the violation (see below), and a timeframe within which to fix each violation.

Classifying Violations:

All violations will be classified as to the nature of the risk involved and the complexity of the proposed remedy. The allowed time to correct each of these violations will depend on the classification and will also be provided. Actual assessment of risk will be left to the inspection team. The requirement for a formal re-inspection will also be noted.

Notification:

Right after each inspection, an email and hard copy of the inspection results will be sent to the faculty member and designated safety coordinator for each lab area with safety violations, documenting the violations and the timeframe for rectifying them. This notification will be followed up with meetings between members of the inspection team and the faculty member and/or the safety coordinator for each affected lab area.

Rectifying Violations in a Timely Manner:

Rectifying a violation means correcting the violation directly or taking the proper steps to have the violation corrected (such as scheduling an electrician to add outlets). 'Timely' means meeting the timeline given on the violation report for corrective action.

Consequences for Not Rectifying Violations in a Timely Manner:

For the first failure to rectify a violation in a timely manner, the lab PI will be issued a corrective e-mail by the Assistant Head, with a copy to the Head. For a potentially severe violation, the Assistant Head reserves the right to elevate the consequences.

Habitual or repeated failures to rectify violations will result in revoking access to the lab, that is, rekeying the locks and/or removing card swipe access. During this time period, access to the lab will be granted by the Building Deputy only to enable the lab members to rectify the violations. Only after a re-inspection will access to the lab be re-granted.

Serious safety violations may be handled at the discretion of the Assistant Head and Head.